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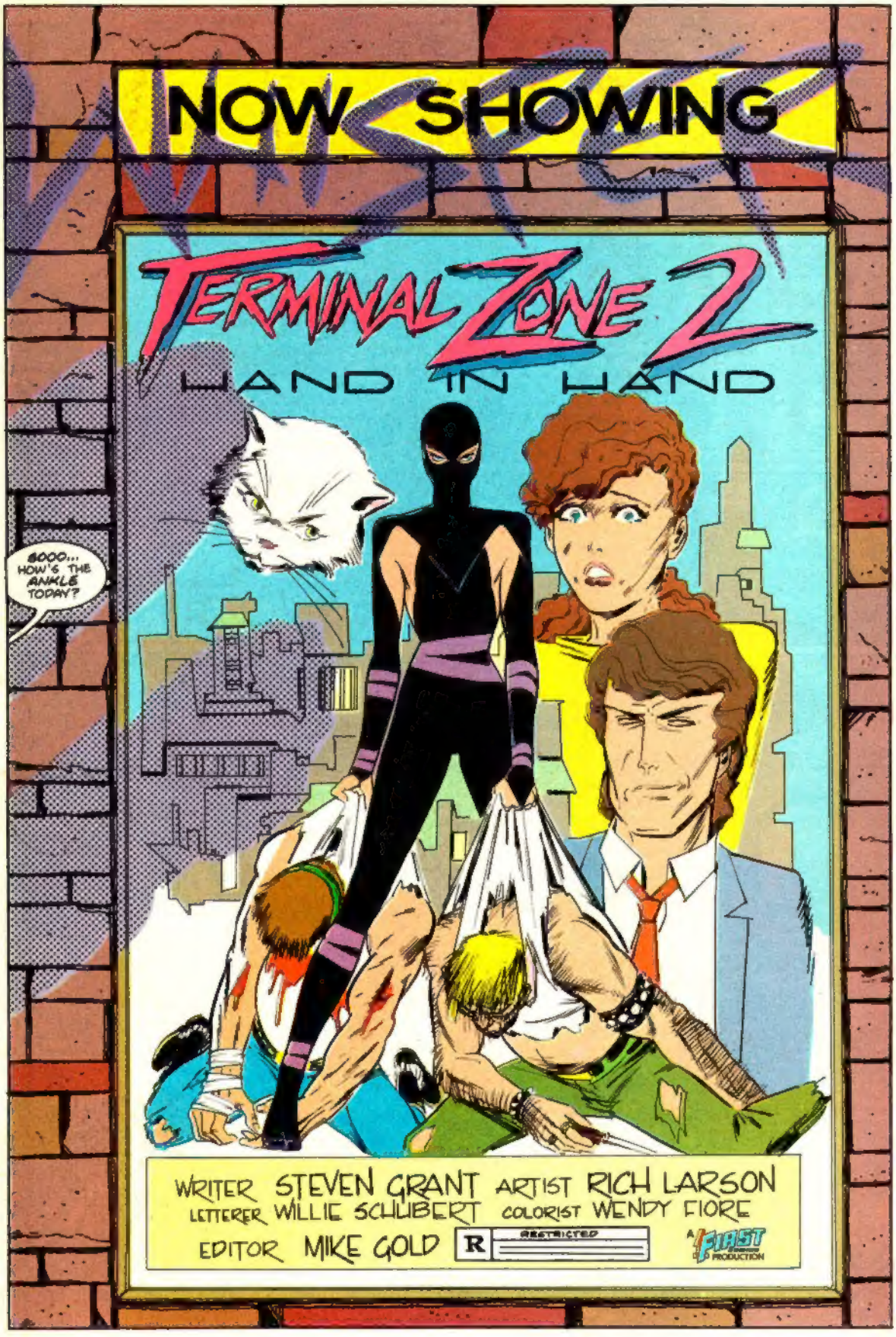

NOW SHOWING
TERMINAL ZONE 2
HAND IN HAND
GOOD... HOW'S THE ANKLE TODAY?
WRITER STEVEN GRANT ARTIST RICH LARSON
LETTERER WILLIE SCHUBERT COLORIST WENDY FIORE
EDITOR MIKE GOLD
R RESTRICTED
A FIRST PRODUCTION

NOT BAD FOR ALMOST HAVING HALF A BUILDING FALL ON IT...
IT'S A GOOD THING THOSE BOOTLEGGERS KNEW HOW TO BUILD TUNNELS.
BY THE WAY, DID YOU ASK YOUR BOYFRIEND WHY HE SET UP HEADQUARTERS IN AN OLD SPEAKEASY?
WHY DO YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO REFER TO HIM IN THAT TONE OF VOICE?
AND HE HAS A NAME.
I KNOW, I KNOW. I JUST DON'T LIKE THE GUY.
HE SAYS HE DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT ANY BOOTLEGGERS. THAT WAS A LONG TIME AGO.
BUS STOP
I CAN'T PRESS HIM WITHOUT TELLING HIM MORE ABOUT YOU THAN YOU'D WANT ME TO.
NO, I SUPPOSE NOT...
DISARMAMENT BOMBING SQUADRON DISBANDED
WHY ARE WE STANDING HERE? THERE GOES OUR BUS!
WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOU TODAY?!

OH!
GUESS WHO?
LESA, I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET KIRK MALLINDER.
YEAH, THE BLUEPRINT FILE THING. YOU TOLD ME.
KIRK AND I ARE WORKING ON A COMPUTER PROJECT FOR WHITLOCK.
NICE TO MEET YOU, K--
YOU'RE ON A DATE!
YOU HAVEN'T BEEN ON A DATE SINCE NINETEEN-S--
MMMPH!
SHALL WE GO, KIRK?
IT WAS NICE MEETING YOU, TOO, LESA. GIVE MY REGARDS TO SENATOR CANALES.

RIGHT. I'LL BE OVER AT HIS PLACE LATER-- SO DON'T WORRY ABOUT DISTURBING ME WHEN YOU COME HOME, ALEX.
ALEX!
A DATE. HUH!
A DATE!
"BLESS ME, FATHER FOR I HAVE SINNED.
EEEEEE
CRASH!
SENATOR! HOW NICE TO SEE YOU!
WHITLOCK BU
"IT HAS BEEN TWELVE YEARS SINCE MY LAST CONFESSION..."

NICE? I GOT YOUR SAMPLE, WHITLOCK!
CULVER WHITLOCK PRESIDENT
WHAT ARE YOU TRYING TO DO TO ME?
YOU SHOULD LEAVE, CYNTHIA. I'M SURE THE SENATOR WANTS THIS DISCUSION KEPT COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL.
YES, SIR.
YOUR SQUEEZE?
MY DAUGHTER! AND KEEP YOUR OILY HANDS OFF HER!
WOULD YOU CARE FOR A DRINK? I THINK YOU'LL NEED ONE.
"IN THAT TIME, I HAVE LIED... I HAVE CHEATED..."

I DON'T BELIEVE THIS! IS THIS, LIKE, THE SOCIABLE WAY TO SCREW SOMEBODY?
WHERE THE HELL DID YOU GET THOSE PAPERS?!
SOMEONE SENT THEM IN THE MAIL. I DON'T KNOW WHO. IT DOESN'T MATTER.
WHAT MATTERS IS THAT THEY CONNECT YOU--HEART, SOUL, AND POLITICAL CAREER--TO SONNY ROMAN.
"SENATOR'S MOB CONNECTIONS!" THAT WOULD MAKE QUITE A HEADLINE.
YOU KNOW I'VE DISLIKED YOUR VOTING RECORD IN CONGRESS? THAT I'VE CONSIDERED BACKING A CANDIDATE TO RUN AGAINST YOU?
GET TO THE POINT!
PERHAPS THAT ISN'T NECESSARY.
"I HAVE MADE FALSE PROMISES... AND USED PEOPLE FOR MY OWN ENDS..."
I WON'T BE YOUR PUPPET! FORGET IT.
MAYBE I'LL JUST GIVE SONNY ROMAN A CALL--AND LET HIM TAKE CARE OF YOU!
FEEL FREE. SONNY LIKES TO PROTECT HIS INVESTMENTS.

FIRST NOTES

FAMILY ALBUM, FALL 1985 EDITION

Lots of exciting changes happening here at First Comics this month, and we'd just love to fill you in. Eagle-eyed masthead readers no doubt will notice them before too long, but here's the advance scoop.

First, a few promotions and staff additions.

Rick Oliver, the first guy to join the First staff back some four years ago, has been promoted to manager of our licensing, advertising and merchandising division — known as LAM around these parts. Rick will be overseeing the above-burgeoning areas for First Comics, which includes our new commercial comics activities including the illustrations for a series of children's books and the comic book rule book for a recently-released role playing game.

Seeing as how he's deeply committed to continuing his 60 hour work week, Rick will remain on as editor of Nexus, Grimjack, Blaze Barlow and Dynamo Joe — as well as a new graphic novel series we'd simply love to tell you about someday soon.

Laurel Fitch will be succeeding Mr. Oliver as editorial coordinator. Laurel's been with us for about a year and a half now, serving as subscriptions manager, proofreader and assistant to sales manager **Kathy Kotsivas.** Laurel will continue her proofreading work, but will add to her schedule all the deadline scheduling and overseeing, and she'll be editing some First features before too long as well.

All of this creates at least one job opening, so **Lucia Alleruzzo** will be taking Ms. Fitch's previous responsibilities. A newcomer to the field, Lucia survived her test of fire at last July's Chicago Comicon, where she met about 40 First Comics writers and artists, several dozen retailers and distributors, and about a jillion fans. Nothing like jumping in at the deep end, Lucia; welcome aboard.

By the time you read this, we also will have expanded our production staff by one artist. Job interviews begin this week (it's July around these parts, folks) and art director **Alex Wald** already is hip-deep in resumes.

I should take this opportunity to thank our two summer interns, **Dan Kaufman** and **Seth Sanders,** both of whom decided to blow off their normal summer vacations in order to toil away in our production department, learning the ropes and discovering the true meaning of deadline hysteria. Thanks, guys; we hope to see you back soon.

So the *real* question is, where do we *put* all these people? Obviously, not in our already overgrown Evanston headquarters.

Sometime in the middle of September, we are going to be moving to vastly larger offices in downtown Chicago, some twelve miles south of our present location. I know this because we've already signed the lease and approved the blueprints — millions of people are laboring hard to put in the wiring and the light fixtures, build the walls, install the carpeting, and do all kinds of wonderful things to make our new offices as

stunning as humanly possible.

Our new offices are *three times larger* than our present facilities, which should give us some serious breathing room around here. We're working at the rate of eight books a month (and increasing at our usual, steady pace) plus graphic novels and special projects — not to mention the commercial comics — so you can see why we're so excited about the move.

Of course, when it actually comes to putting everything in boxes, schlepping them down to the new place, and unpacking all that stuff while trying to maintain our usual production schedules, I probably won't be so excited. I'm sure I'll learn first-hand (no pun intended) just how much fun our friends at DC, Marvel, Eclipse and Fantagraphics had when they suffered through their moves these past several years.

Of course, there would be no reason to hire on additional staff and move to larger quarters if not for the fact that our titles have been so well received by you — the person who is holding this magazine and reading these words right now. You and a couple hundred thousand people who are somewhat like you. We owe you a lot more than just our jobs — and we thank you from the bottoms of our hearts.

— Mike Gold

FIRST IN SEPTEMBER

Badger #9 — Meet the Cobra! Meet the world's strangest cab driver! Meet the long-dead movie star! And see how it's all put together on one "Hot August Night," by **Mike Baron, Bill Reinhold** and **Sam DeLaRosa!**

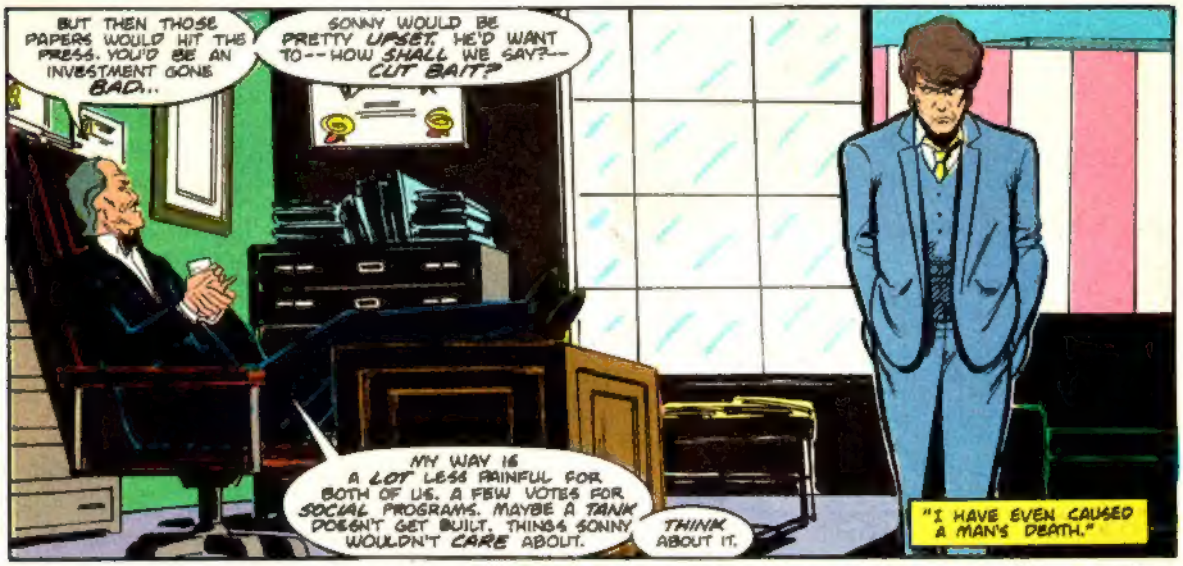
First Adventures #2 — The second installments of our present Whisper, Dynamo Joe and Blaze Barlow sagas — produced, respectively, by **Steven Grant** and **Rich Larson, John Ostrander** and **Doug Rice,** and **Peter B. Gillis** and **Barry Crain!**

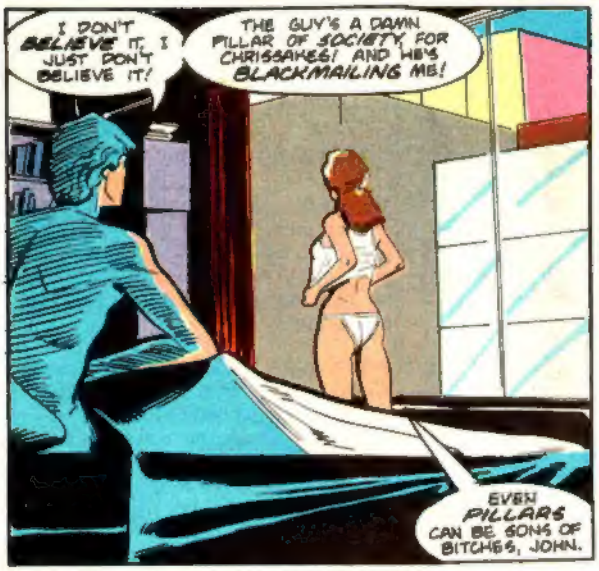
Grimjack #18 — Written by **John Ostrander** and drawn by **Tim Truman,** this issue marks the beginning of "Trade Wars," the most *important* **Grimjack** story ever told! "Trade Wars" is so important, it ties in with the **John Ostrander-Steve Erwin** Munden's Bar story!

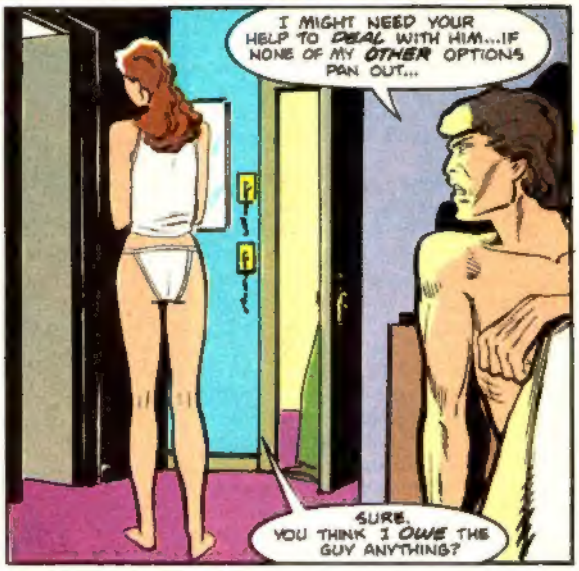
Jon Sable, Freelance #32 — The booklength conclusion to "The Gauntlet," **Mike Grell's** Central America extravaganza!

Nexus #16 — The dream ends: Nexus emerges from the tank and death follows in his wake. "Into the Web," by **Mike Baron, Steve Rude** and **Eric Shanower** — plus, Baron and **Mark A. Nelson** see to it that Clonezone the Hilariator meets Jokin' Johnny Jerkowitz — but has Clonezone met his match?

Original E-Man and Michael Mauser #4 (limited series) — Re-presenting, in our high-quality deluxe edition, the complete E-Man stories from *Charlton's E-Man* #5 and #6.

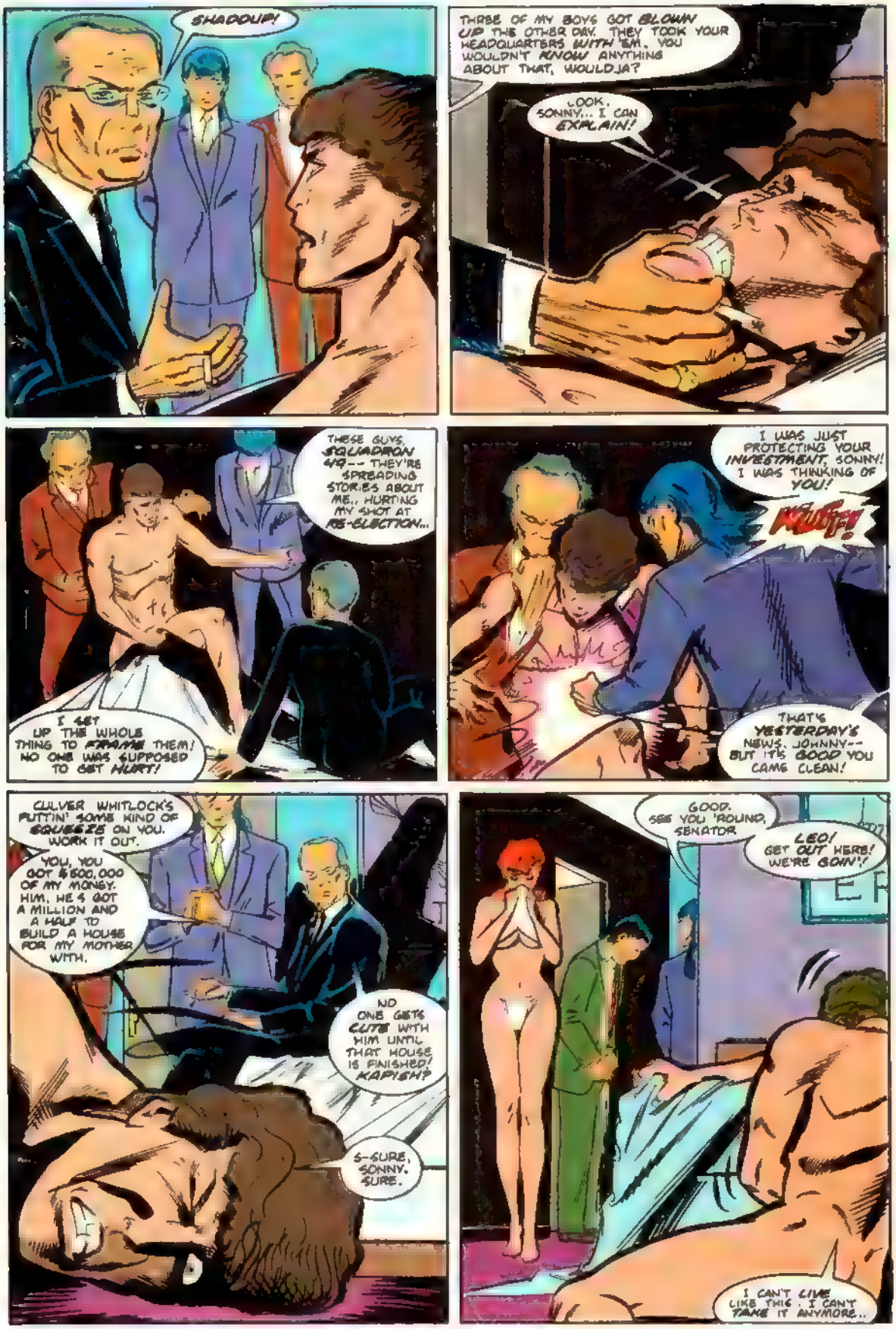

BUT THEN THOSE PAPERS WOULD HIT THE PRESS. YOU'D BE AN INVESTMENT GONE BAD...
SONNY WOULD BE PRETTY UPSET. HE'D WANT TO--HOW SHALL WE SAY?--CUT BAIT?
MY WAY IS A LOT LESS PAINFUL FOR BOTH OF US. A FEW VOTES FOR SOCIAL PROGRAMS. MAYBE A TANK DOESN'T GET BUILT. THINGS SONNY WOULDN'T CARE ABOUT.
THINK ABOUT IT.
"I HAVE EVEN CAUSED A MAN'S DEATH."


I DON'T BELIEVE IT. I JUST DON'T BELIEVE IT!
THE GUY'S A DAMN PILLAR OF SOCIETY, FOR CHRISSAKES! AND HE'S BLACKMAILING ME!
EVEN PILLARS CAN BE SONS OF BITCHES, JOHN.


I MIGHT NEED YOUR HELP TO DEAL WITH HIM...IF NONE OF MY OTHER OPTIONS PAN OUT...
SURE. YOU THINK I OWE THE GUY ANYTHING?

IF WORST COMES TO WORST, THERE'S ALWAYS LITTLE ALEX...
OH!
TAKE 'ER INTO THE BATHROOM AND PLUG 'ER EARS WITH COTTON, LEO. ME AN' THE SENATOR GOT THINGS TO DISCUSS.

HEY--!
YOU STILL COLLECTIN' FASHION MODELS, JOHNNY. I GIVE YOU HALF A MILLION BUCKS AN' YOU PISS IT AWAY ON FASHION MODELS.
SONNY!
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?! IF IF ANYONE SAW YOU--


SHADDUP!
THREE OF MY BOYS GOT BLOWN UP THE OTHER DAY. THEY TOOK YOUR HEADQUARTERS WITH 'EM. YOU WOULDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT, WOULDJA?
LOOK, SONNY... I CAN EXPLAIN!
THESE GUYS, SQUADRON 49-- THEY'RE SPREADING STORIES ABOUT ME., HURTING MY SHOT AT RE-ELECTION...
I SET UP THE WHOLE THING TO FRAME THEM! NO ONE WAS SUPPOSED TO GET HURT!
I WAS JUST PROTECTING YOUR INVESTMENT, SONNY! I WAS THINKING OF YOU!
KLUFF!
THAT'S YESTERDAY'S NEWS, JOHNNY-- BUT IT'S GOOD YOU CAME CLEAN!
CULVER WHITLOCK'S PUTTIN' SOME KIND OF SQUEEZE ON YOU. WORK IT OUT.
YOU, YOU GOT $500,000 OF MY MONEY. HIM, HE'S GOT A MILLION AND A HALF TO BUILD A HOUSE FOR MY MOTHER WITH.
NO ONE GETS CUTE WITH HIM UNTIL THAT HOUSE IS FINISHED! KAPISH?
S-SURE, SONNY. SURE.
GOOD. SEE YOU 'ROUND, SENATOR.
LEO! GET OUT HERE! WE'RE GOIN'!
I CAN'T LIVE LIKE THIS. I CAN'T TAKE IT ANYMORE..

Don't let this happen to you. SUBSCRIBE!

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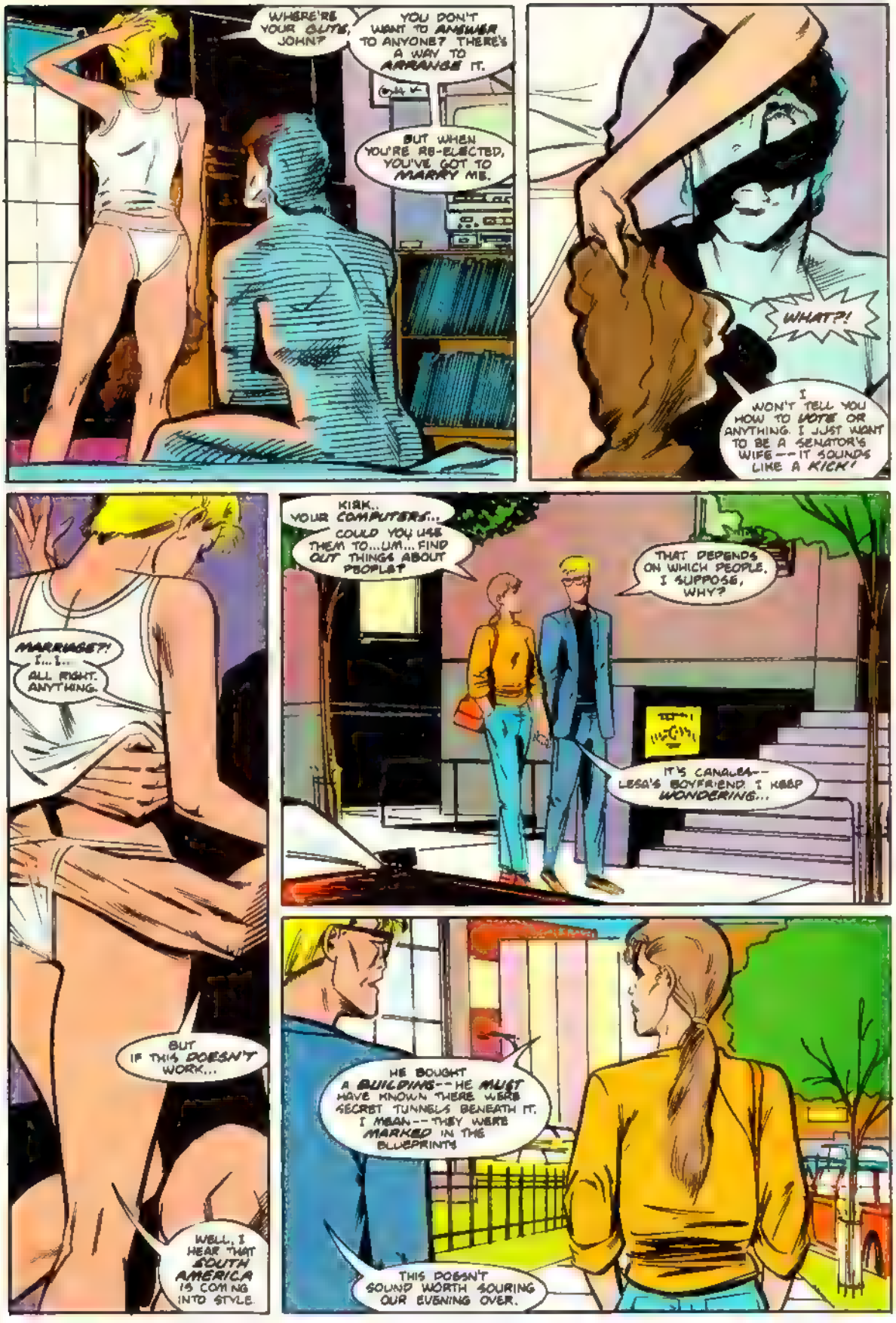
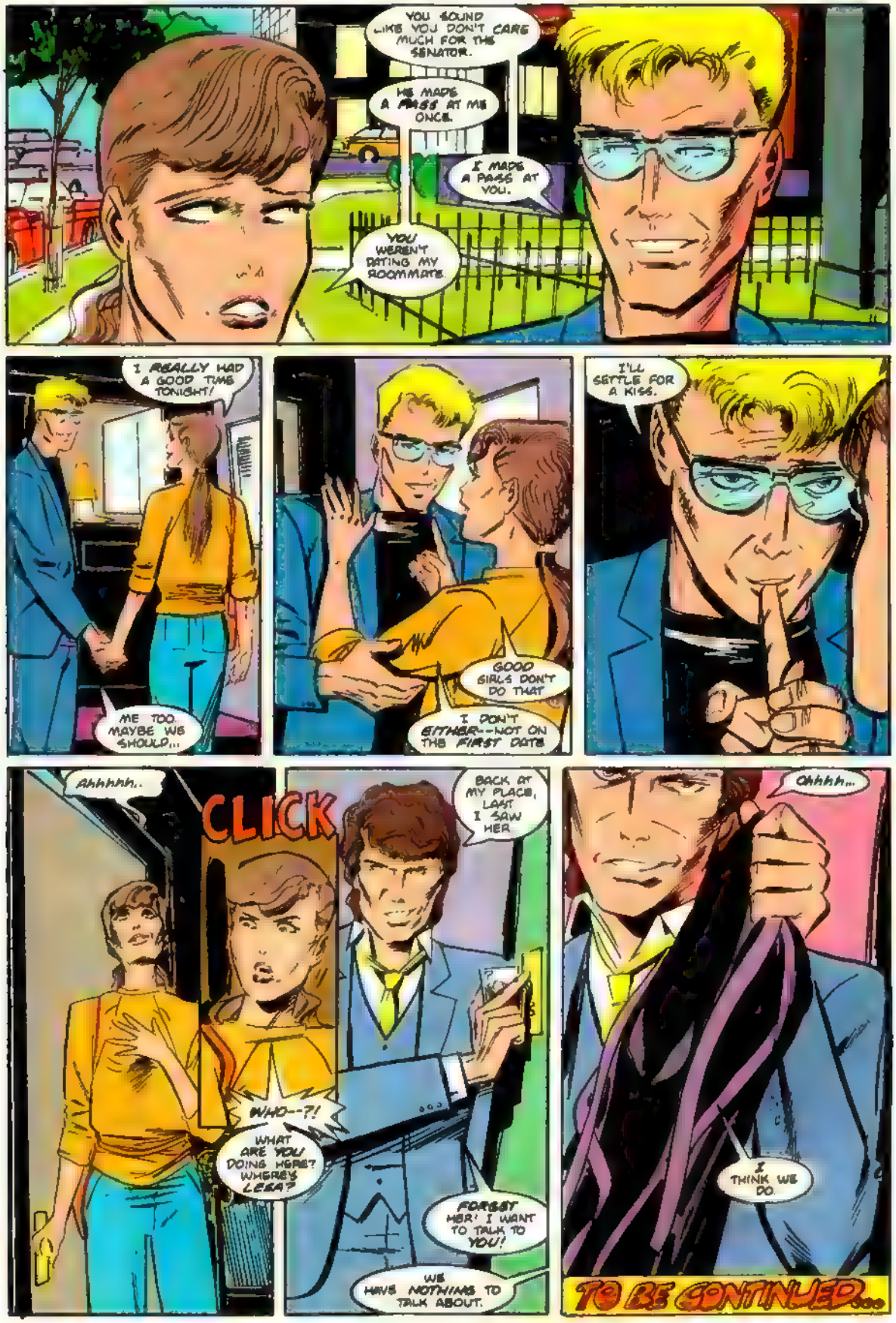

WHERE'RE YOUR GUYS, JOHN?
YOU DON'T WANT TO ANSWER TO ANYONE? THERE'S A WAY TO ARRANGE IT.
BUT WHEN YOU'RE RE-ELECTED, YOU'VE GOT TO MARRY ME.
WHAT?!
I WON'T TELL YOU HOW TO VOTE OR ANYTHING. I JUST WANT TO BE A SENATOR'S WIFE--IT SOUNDS LIKE A KICK!
MARRIAGE?! I... I... ALL RIGHT. ANYTHING.
BUT IF THIS DOESN'T WORK...
WELL, I HEAR THAT SOUTH AMERICA IS COMING INTO STYLE.
KIRK.. YOUR COMPUTERS... COULD YOU USE THEM TO...UM... FIND OUT THINGS ABOUT PEOPLE?
THAT DEPENDS ON WHICH PEOPLE. I SUPPOSE, WHY?
IT'S CANALES-- LESA'S BOYFRIEND I KEEP WONDERING...
HE BOUGHT A BUILDING--HE MUST HAVE KNOWN THERE WERE SECRET TUNNELS BENEATH IT. I MEAN--THEY WERE MARKED IN THE BLUEPRINTS
THIS DOESN'T SOUND WORTH SOURING OUR EVENING OVER.


YOU SOUND LIKE YOU DON'T CARE MUCH FOR THE SENATOR.
HE MADE A PASS AT ME ONCE.
I MADE A PASS AT YOU.
YOU WEREN'T DATING MY ROOMMATE.
I REALLY HAD A GOOD TIME TONIGHT!
ME TOO. MAYBE WE SHOULD...
GOOD GIRLS DON'T DO THAT
I DON'T EITHER--NOT ON THE FIRST DATE
I'LL SETTLE FOR A KISS.
Ahhhhh..
CLICK
BACK AT MY PLACE, LAST I SAW HER.
WHO--?!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHERE'S LEA?
FORGET HER! I WANT TO TALK TO YOU!
WE HAVE NOTHING TO TALK ABOUT.
Ohhhh...
I THINK WE DO.
TO BE CONTINUED...

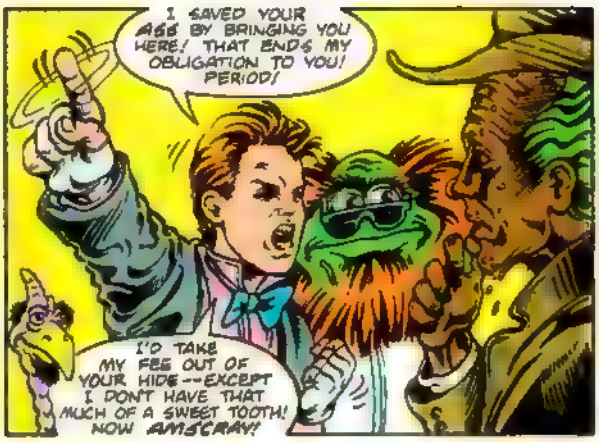
BLAZE BARLOW
AND THE
ETERNITY COMMAND
WE MADE IT! WE ESCAPED! WE'RE ALIVE!
BUT DID WE? THOSE PSYCHOPATHIC ANGELS THREW A TRANSCENDENTAL RANDOMIZER AT US! WE COULD BE ANYWHERE--ANYWHERE AT ALL!
RELAX, KIDS. I THINK WE'RE WHERE WE WANT TO BE.
WHEN TITANS
PARTY
PETER B. GILLIS
CREATOR/WRITER
BARRY CRAIN
ARTIST
WILLIE SCHUBERT
LETTERER
TOM LITTLEJOHN
COLORIST
RICK OLIVER
EDITOR

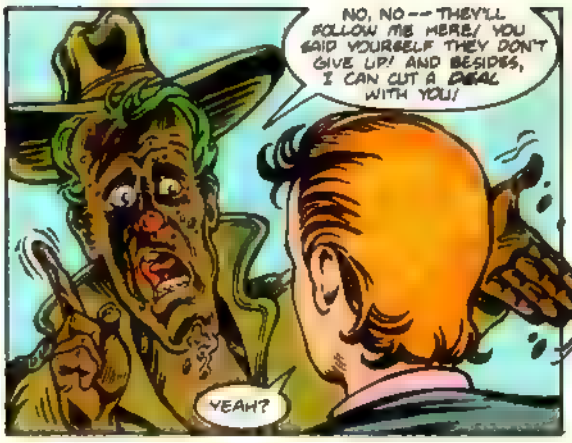
OK! THEN WHAT'S ALL THIS STUFF?
LAKERS
JUST SIDE EFFECTS FROM THE RANDOMIZER, SPIKE--HAPPENS ALL THE TIME!
NOW MOVE--WE'VE GOT PLACES TO BE!
WE MADE IT--BUT ONLY JUST. THEY'LL BE BACK--THAT TYPE JUST DON'T QUIT--BUT FOR NOW, WE'RE SAFE FROM THE APOCALYPSE SQUAD. EVERYTHING'S OK.
YOU HEARD BLAZE--SCRAM!
BLAZE!! UH--THIS BUNNY'S MADE OUT OF CHOCOLATE-COVERED PLUTONIUM--!
DON'T WORRY, KID--GIVE IT TO SPIKE. HE COLLECTS STUFF LIKE THAT
SOME OF THESE ARE CUTE, BLAZE; CAN'T WE KEEP THEM?
AFRAID NOT, NOCTURNE--WE'RE STRETCHING OUR INVITATION BY BRINGING ALONG THIS FUGITIVE ALIEN [redacted] MAN AS IT IS. THIS IS A FAIRLY EXCLUSIVE BASH!
I'M GETTING A TINGLE--WALK THIS WAY!
AND--LE VOILA! OUR DESTINATION--
--THE PALACE OF THE PARTY ANIMAL!
MY GOODNESS!

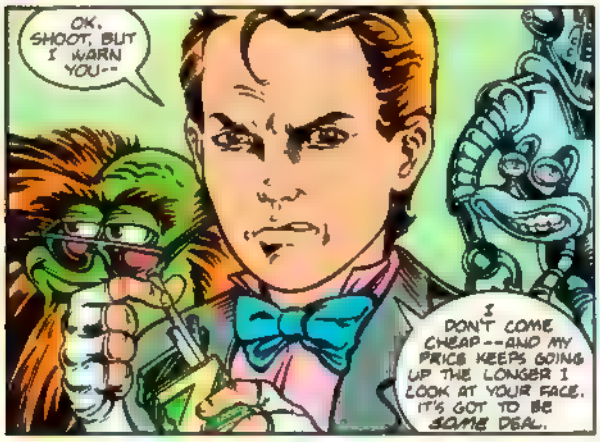
HMMM-- WHAT DO YOU THINK OF IT, SPIKE?
I LIKE IT, NOCTURNE! SHOWY-- YET OSTENTATIOUS.
NOT AN EXIT
YEAH, WELL-- IT LOOKS LIKE MOST OF THE GUESTS ARE ALREADY HERE. LET'S GO IN.
AND LET ME REMIND THE FAMED ETERNITY COMMAND THAT WE'RE HERE FOR A REASON! SO-- EYES OPEN!
THIS IS GOING TO BE GREAT!
YOU DON'T KNOW THE HALF OF IT, MY ANGELIC FRIEND.
OK-- NOW PUT YOURSELVES TOGETHER. WE'VE GOT A REPUTATION TO UPHOLD.
WATCH YER STEP

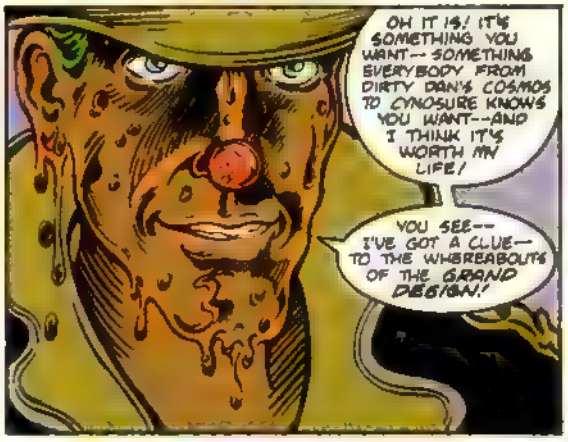
CALM DOWN
YAAH! GET ME BEHIND THEE-- A DEMON!
INVITATION?
HERE YOU ARE--WE'VE BROUGHT AN EXTRA GUEST. I HOPE YOUR HOST WON'T MIND--?
NOT AT ALL, SIR. YOUR HAT AND COAT?
THANK YOU.
AND THE BROWN GENTLEMAN?
HEY!
OH, EXCUSE ME, DREADFULLY SORRY.
IT'S TOO BAD YOU HAD TO MAKE A CORPOREAL FORM OF CAKES AND COOKIES, MY FRIEND--SOME OF THE GUESTS MIGHT MISTAKE YOU FOR THE DESSERT.
OH, DON'T WORRY. THERE ARE LIFE FORMS HERE THAT WOULD CONSIDER ME DESSERT SOONER THAN YOU.
THEY-- MIGHT?
I WOULDN'T TOUCH THAT LINE WITH AN EIGHT FOOT HUNGARIAN NOCTURE LET'S MINGLE.
4

I HAVE TO SAY THAT WE NEVER HAD SUCH A... VARIETY OF GUESTS BACK IN HEAVEN. IT'S ALL VERY NEW--! ARE YOU SURE I WON'T BE--
--BLAZE? BLAZE WHERE ARE YOU?
BLAZE! BLAZE BARLOW! HAWAYA?
FINE, P.A.-- ALL THINGS CONSIDERED.
WHERE DID HE GO? OH NO-- ALL THESE STRANGE-- BLAZE!
WELL, MY REPUTATION FOR GIVING PARTIES MUST BE IMPROVING-- YOU FINALLY ANSWERED ONE OF MY INVITATIONS!
CAN I, P.A. YOU KNOW WHY I'M HERE.
I CAUGHT THE NOT-SO-SUBTLE HINT IN YOUR INVITE. OR WAS THAT ALL EYEWASH?
TRY THE RIESLING, B.B-- IT'S SUPERB!
C'MON, BLAZE-- HAVE I EVER LIED TO YOU?
TO GET ME ON YOUR GUEST LIST? SURE!
I'LL ASK THIS ONCE--IS HE GOING TO BE HERE?
WHY BLAZE, HE MIGHT-- JUST MIGHT-- BE HERE ALREADY!
THERE YOU ARE! I THOUGHT I'D LOST YOU! THANK GOODNESS!
YOU? YOU?
5

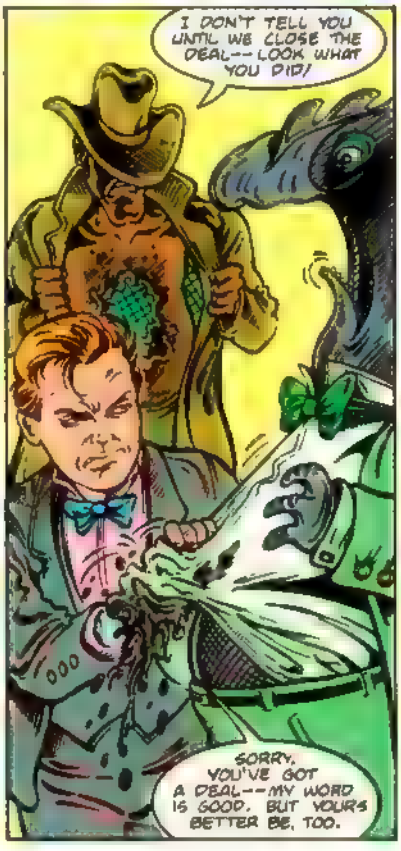

I SAVED YOUR ASS BY BRINGING YOU HERE! THAT ENDS MY OBLIGATION TO YOU! PERIOD!
I'D TAKE MY FEE OUT OF YOUR HIDE--EXCEPT I DON'T HAVE THAT MUCH OF A SWEET TOOTH! NOW AMSCRAY!


NO, NO--THEY'LL FOLLOW ME HERE! YOU SAID YOURSELF THEY DON'T GIVE UP! AND BESIDES, I CAN CUT A DEAL WITH YOU!
YEAH?


OK. SHOOT, BUT I WARN YOU--
I DON'T COME CHEAP--AND MY PRICE KEEPS GOING UP THE LONGER I LOOK AT YOUR FACE. IT'S GOT TO BE SOME DEAL.


OH IT IS! IT'S SOMETHING YOU WANT--SOMETHING EVERYBODY FROM DIRTY DAN'S COSMOS TO CYNOSURE KNOWS YOU WANT--AND I THINK IT'S WORTH MY LIFE!
YOU SEE--I'VE GOT A CLUE--TO THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE GRAND DESIGN!

WHAT?!? WHY, YOU--WHAT IS IT?!?
HEY! EASY ON THE INCARNATION, PLEASE!


I DON'T TELL YOU UNTIL WE CLOSE THE DEAL--LOOK WHAT YOU DID!
SORRY, YOU'VE GOT A DEAL--MY WORD IS GOOD. BUT YOURS BETTER BE, TOO.

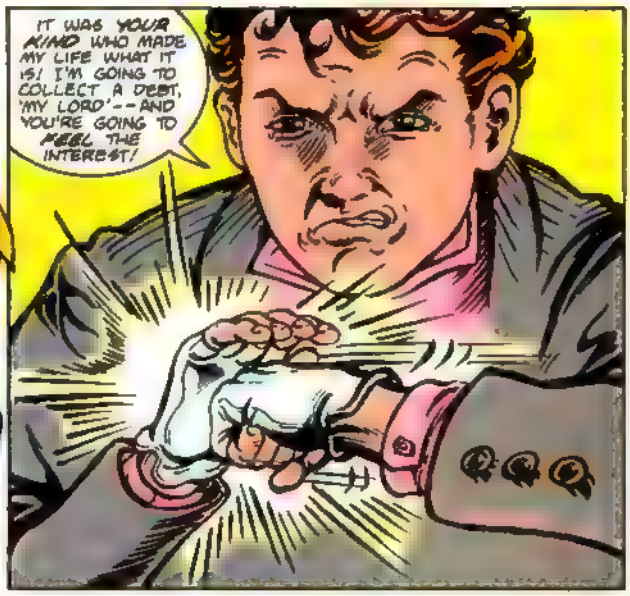
NOW COME WITH ME.

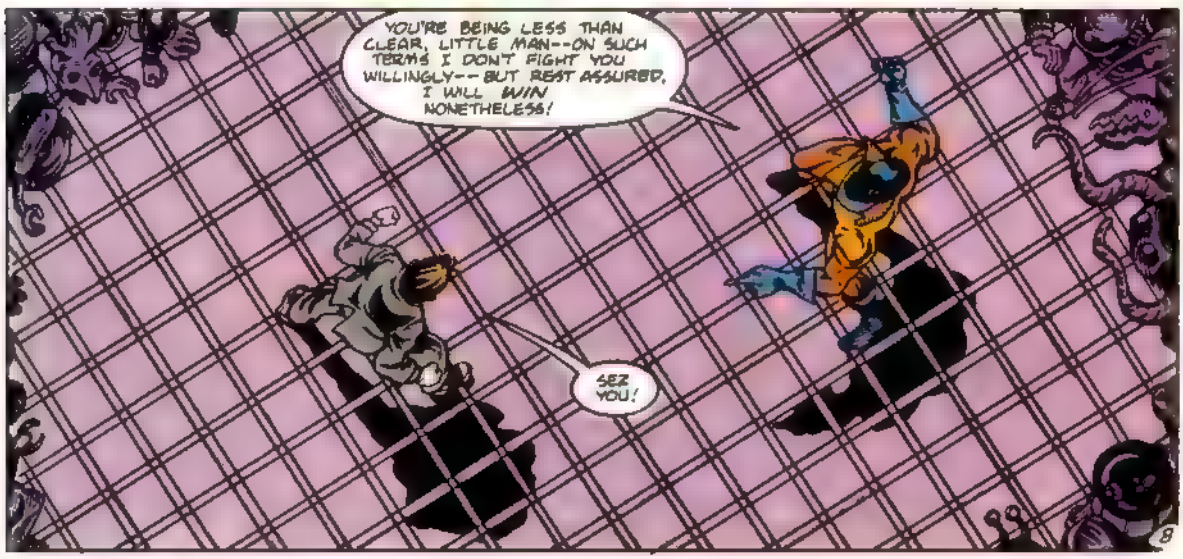
SOME CAKE, SIR?
OH, BLESS YOU!
BLAAAZE! HAAVEN'T SEEEN YOOU SINCE THE BLOAATER WAARS ON BORBORYSMUS! HOW YA DOOIN'?
OK, HAARRY. 'SCUSE ME--!
Ahhh. I NEEDED THAT!
BLAZE!! ANY LUCK WITH YOUR PROBLEM! DID IT! YOU FOUND?
MAYBE TONIGHT, BINK. 'SCUSE ME--!
THANK YOU SO MUCH!
VERY GOOD, SIR
JUST A SECOND-- JUST A SECOND--!
I HOPE YOU HAVEN'T SHORTED OUT YOUR CEREBRAL TRANSMITTERS, KIDS--BECAUSE HE'S HERE! GET OVER HERE QUICK!
WHAT--OH, SURE, BLAZE. NOCTURNE! YOU GET THAT?
SURE ON MY WAY--BUT YOU SHOULD REALLY TRY THE RIESLING! IT'S--
CAN IT! AFTER ALL THIS TIME-- IT'S HIM! MY SEARCH IS OVER!

EXCUSE ME, FRIENDS--
--YOUNG MAN? CAN I HELP YOU WITH SOMETHING? I DON'T BELIEVE WE'VE MET--!

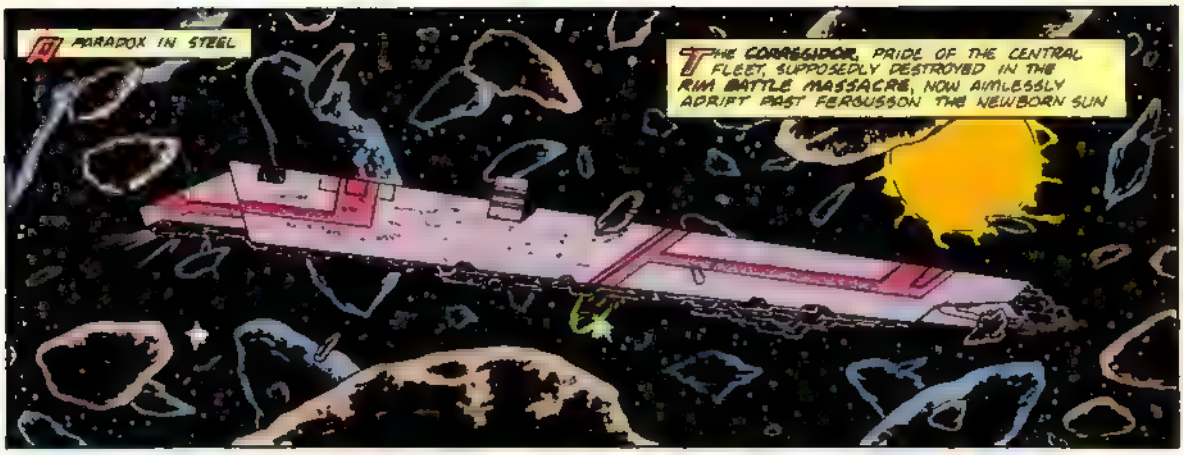
YOU'RE DAMN RIGHT WE HAVEN'T! YOU'RE LORD REGULUS, THE OUTRIDER OF FEN-RA AND THE GRAND DESIGN--
--AND I'M BLAZE BARLOW OF THE ETERNITY COMMAND-- AND I CHALLENGE YOU TO SINGLE COMBAT!

I AM LORD REGULUS ONCE OF FEN-RA. I MUST CONFESS, I'VE NEVER HEARD OF YOU-- BUT THEN, I DON'T FREQUENT THIS PART OF THE MULTIVERSE.
BUT HAVING NEVER MET, WHY DO YOU WANT TO FIGHT ME? I'M PUZZLED.


IT WAS YOUR KIND WHO MADE MY LIFE WHAT IT IS! I'M GOING TO COLLECT A DEBT, 'MY LORD'-- AND YOU'RE GOING TO FEEL THE INTEREST!


YOU'RE BEING LESS THAN CLEAR, LITTLE MAN--ON SUCH TERMS I DON'T FIGHT YOU WILLINGLY-- BUT REST ASSURED, I WILL WIN NONETHELESS!
SEZ YOU!

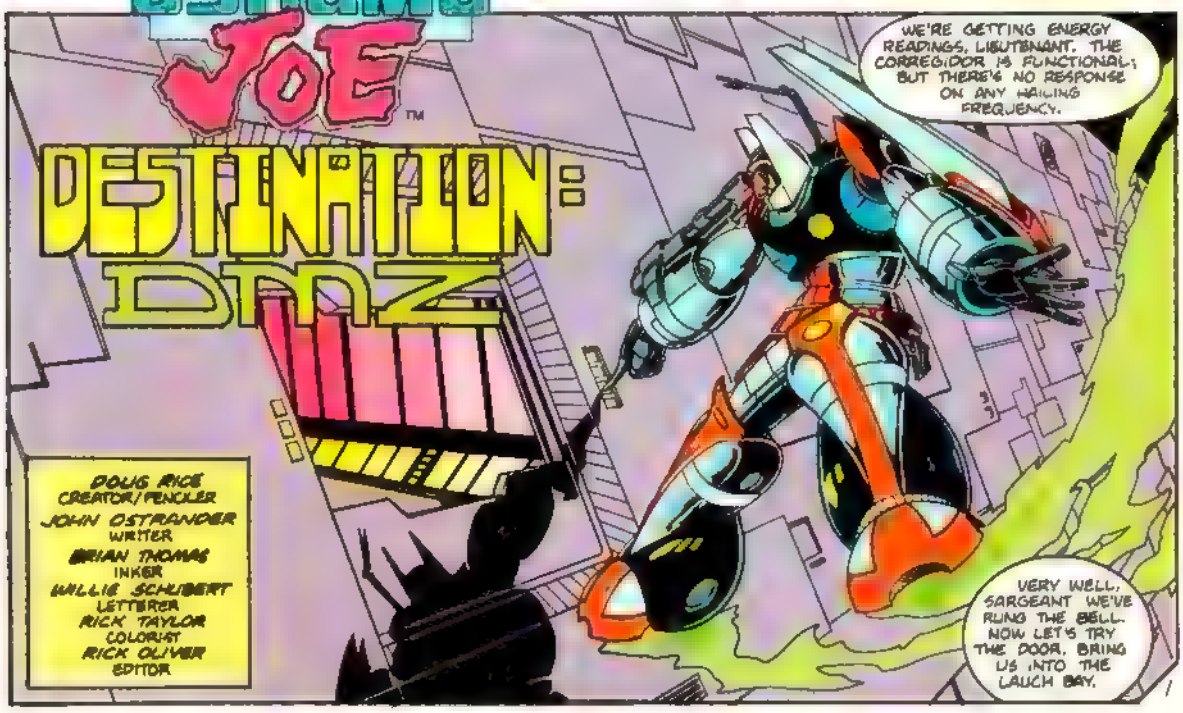
IT WAS MY DUTY TO WARN YOU--BUT YOU'RE RIGHT. LET'S END THIS.
I ASSUME YOU'RE SHIELDED--THAT SHOULD MAKE THIS ALL THE MORE SURPRISING!
SURPRISED? ME? HARD TO SAY! CLOTHES STOOD UP PRETTY WELL--!
BUT--THE ONLY WAY YOU COULD HAVE WITHSTOOD THAT IS IF YOU--
MR. BARLOW--PERHAPS WE SHOULD TALK--!
IT'S GONNA BE DIFFICULT TO DO THAT WITHOUT TEETH, REGU--
FRAIZ
OH MY GOODNESS--!
AWRIGHT, YOU MISERABLE BUNCH OF PARACLETE'S DROPPINGS, HAND OVER BLAZE BARLOW AND HIS FRIENDS--
--OR THE APOCALYPSE SQUAD'LL BRING YOU TO JUDGMENT!
NEXT MONTH: APOCALYPSO NOW!!


PARADOX IN STEEL
THE CORREGIDOR, PRIDE OF THE CENTRAL FLEET, SUPPOSEDLY DESTROYED IN THE RIM BATTLE MASSACRE, NOW AIMLESSLY ADRIFT PAST FERGUSSON THE NEWBORN SUN

SINCE THE START OF THE ORION WAR EIGHT YEARS AGO, THE VERY NATURE OF THE FOE HAS ELUDED THE EARTH CONFEDERATION. WHEN DEFEATED, ALL THE ENEMY WAR MACHINES HAVE SIMPLY DISINTEGRATED. YET THE CORREGIDOR CARRIES ONE WHOLE.
TO THE CREW OF THE STRANDED BATTLESUIT DYNAMO JOE THE CORREGIDOR REPRESENTS THEIR ONLY HOPE FOR RETURNING HOME YET, THE RETRIEVAL OF THE ENEMY MACHINE IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN ANY-- OR ALL--THEIR LIVES.
AND, OF COURSE, THERE IS ALWAYS THE POSSIBILITY OF A TRAP. QUITE POSSIBLY, A TOMB.

DYNAMO JOE™

DESTINATION: DMZ


WE'RE GETTING ENERGY READINGS, LIEUTENANT. THE CORREGIDOR IS FUNCTIONAL; BUT THERE'S NO RESPONSE ON ANY HAILING FREQUENCY.
VERY WELL, SARGEANT WE'VE RUNG THE BELL. NOW LET'S TRY THE DOOR. BRING US INTO THE LAUCH BAY.

DOUG RICE
CREATOR/PENCILER
JOHN OSTRANDER
WRITER
BRIAN THOMAS
INKER
WILLIE SCHUBERT
LETTERER
RICK TAYLOR
COLORIST
RICK OLIVER
EDITOR

Collecting DUST:

A Guide to Preserving Comic Books by Charles Meyerson Part 4

PAPER CHASE

Somewhere, someone may have evidence demonstrating that the higher grades of paper increasingly popular for comics will last longer than the uncoated groundwood (newsprint) paper most commonly used. But the experts I've consulted – the plastic-bag moguls, the preservation wizards and the paper companies' sales representatives – hesitate to make any promises beyond a few years.

The two most popular grades are Boise Cascade's Mando and Great Northern's Baxter.

A Boise Cascade sales rep says Mando tends not to brown as quickly as newsprint. But he says the functional lifetime is probably about the same.

At Great Northern, another sales rep says an experiment to simulate two years of natural aging concluded that Baxter lost only about half as much brightness as newsprint. Baxter carried a clay coating – an inert substance that retards and conceals the effects of aging. Fifty years down the line, Baxter may *look* better than newsprint, but it might crumble away just as easily. "It's not for the archives," he says.

Advice to those caring for "premium" comics: grant them the same protection you give other comics.

BY THE WEI. . .

An addition to our last installment: Deacidification can remove the agents of decay in comic-book paper. Doing it yourself is risky, but professional help is not cheap. For more information on do-it-yourself deacidification, here's an address: Wei T'o Associates, Dr. Richard Smith; P.O. Box 40, Matteson, IL 60443.

THEFT! FIRE! FLOOD! EARTHQUAKE!

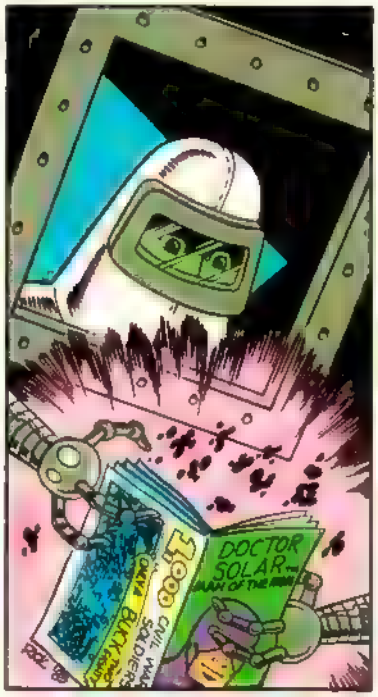
words to strike terror into the hearts of comic-book collectors everywhere. Plastic bags can protect your collection only so much. Beyond that, you're at the mercy of your insurance policy. Do you need one?

If you own a home, you certainly should have *some* insurance. If you're still dependent on your parents, you may be covered; check their policy.

If you're renting an apartment, insurance is probably a good idea. (GEICO, the Government Employees Insurance Co., says one recent industry survey found almost four out of every five U.S. renters do not have their own insurance.) Your landlord's policy – if he has one – probably doesn't cover your possessions. You might be able to sue for damages related to a broken water pipe, but lawsuits are expensive, and let's face it: you have no constitutional right to a jury of comics collectors.

A conversation with your insurance agent is a good idea; coverage varies from policy to policy. And if your comics do meet an untimely demise, your claim will probably be stronger if your insurance agent has heard of your collection in advance.

State Farm Insurance spokesman Dave Hurst had to check, he was surprised to learn that his company *does* insure comics collections.



He says the company generally trusts clients to evaluate their own collections. It doesn't require professional appraisals, but it may compare claims to one of the price guides on the market. If you make a claim, photos of individual items or your collection en masse may come in handy. And having an appraisal in hand won't hurt, it can also help you decide how much coverage you need. (Your local comics dealer may be able to conduct an appraisal.)

Clients can insure collections with what the industry calls "floaters" – additions to a general policy to cover specific, valuable items. Hurst says such coverage from State Farm would run about $1 a year per $100 in value of the items insured.

Hurst says comics also are covered under the company's general policy for homeowners – at no extra cost. And those policies don't put a limit on the value of comic-book collections, as they do on jewelry. The difference is that, unlike many general policies, a "floater" won't stick you for a deductible in the event of a loss, and it would protect your investment in the event of flood, earthquake or war.

A MODEST PROPOSAL

Sooner or later, your collection will turn to dust. But as Dave Newkirk of Warrenville, Illinois, noted in a letter to the Chicago *Reader* earlier this year, laser- and compact-disc technology has reached the point where books can be recorded in detail. One could record almost every aspect of a comic book except that addictive odor of newsprint-and-ink. (And Scratch'n'Sniff technology continues to make great bounds, so...) Embedded in ***PLASTIC***, as they are, discs have proven invulnerable to almost everything. Even chocolate.

The solution, Newkirk reasons, is to translate books to digital form for everyday use, preserving the originals for as long as possible in chilled, helium-filled rooms for review by the scholars who need them.

A FINAL THOUGHT

What about that ultimate destroyer of comic books — nuclear war?

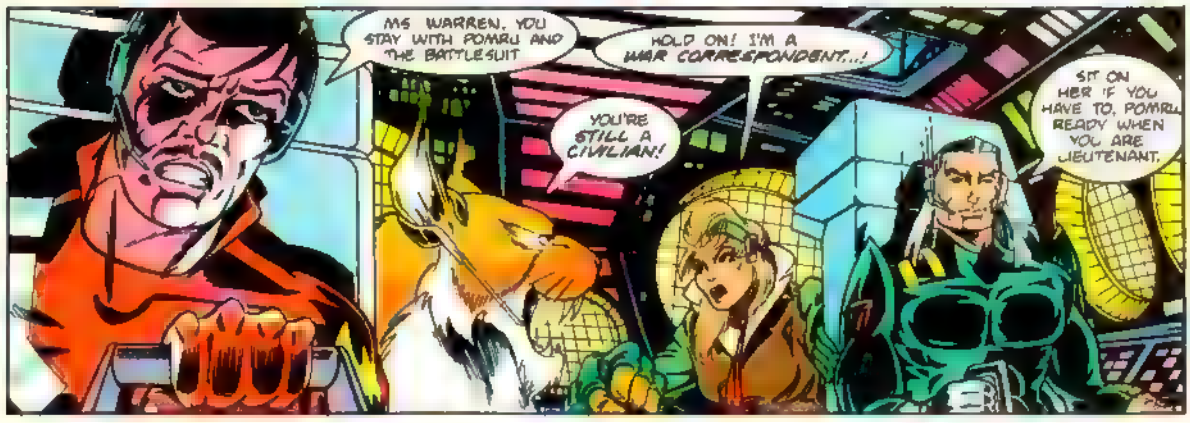
At the Chicago-area headquarters of the U.S. Energy Department, spokesman Brian Quirke says radiation itself doesn't pose much of a hazard to comics, but atmospheric fallout can contaminate them. If you keep them in a basement, that shouldn't be a major problem. The major threat is fire; but that might be a problem only within a few dozen miles of ground zero. (Of course, a nuclear war could result in *thousands* of ground zeroes!)

Quirke says the major cause of death after a nuclear exchange would probably be widespread contamination of drinking water, which would lead to a massive outbreak of diarrhea. If so, a large, well-preserved collection of comic books could prove far more valuable than anything envisioned in Overstreet's Price Guide.

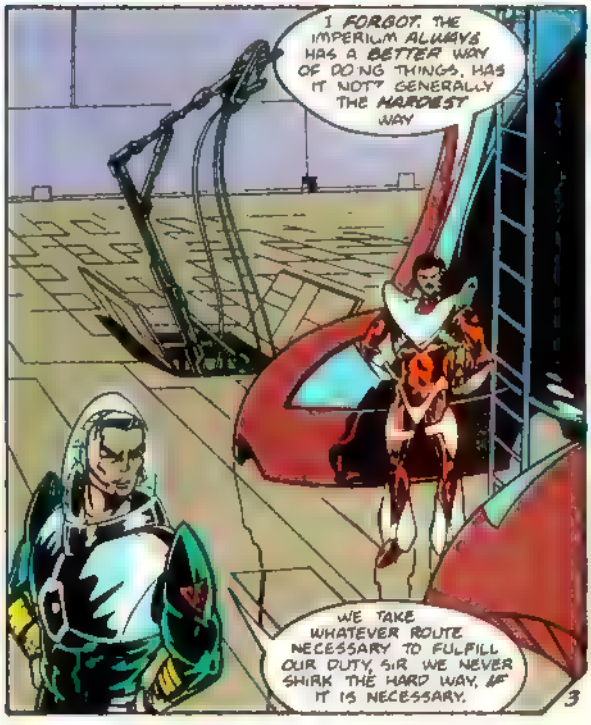
[Charlie Meyerson lives in Oak Park, Illinois. His lawyer wife, Pam, advised him on the constitutional questions raised in this article.]

EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT PRESSURIZING.
kenk
kenk
HATCH JAMMED OR BLOCKED, DARO?
COULD BE EITHER SIR. ANALYSIS OF HATCH STRENGTH, POMRU?
COMPARED TO JOE? CARDBOARD, SARGE!
CHRANK!
GETTING LIFE-FORM READINGS ON THE SCANNER, SARGE! CONCENTRATIONS, FORE AND AFT. SOLITARY ONE CLOSE-BY!
I THOUGHT YOU SAID THERE WAS NO ONE ON THIS BOAT!
SHIP, MS. WARREN
ALL I SAID WAS THEY WEREN'T ANSWERING OUR CALLS
WELL, WHY AREN'T THEY?! WHAT'S THEIR PROBLEM?!
THEY PROBABLY FOUND OUT YOU WERE WITH US
THAT'S ENOUGH, PRIVATE

HOT JETS! SARGE, THIS HANGER BAY'S FULLY STOCKED AND FUNCTIONAL! LOOK! HELLIONS PARKED, PACT'S AND APS* FOR THE TAKING!
HOLY TUNA! READOUT SAYS THEY GOT AUTOMATIC REFIT FOR DYNAMO CLASS BATTLESUITS! PUT ON YOUR B.B. JOE; IT'S CHOW TIME!
RIGHT. SARGEANT DARO, YOU AND I WILL DO A LITTLE RECON. PRIVATE POMRU, YOU TEND TO THE BATTLESUIT AND MAINTAIN COMMUNICATIONS.
*HELLIONS- NDIVIDUAL FIGHTER CRAFT
PACTS-PERSONAL AIR CUSHION TRANSPORTS
APS-ARMORED POWER SUITS; ONE PERSON ROBOTS


MS WARREN, YOU STAY WITH POMRU AND THE BATTLESUIT
HOLD ON! I'M A WAR CORRESPONDENT...!
YOU'RE STILL A CIVILIAN!
SIT ON HER IF YOU HAVE TO, POMRU. READY WHEN YOU ARE, LIEUTENANT.

THE WAY I SEE IT, WE BORROW TWO OF THESE PACT'S AND DO A FAST SURVEY. I'LL GO APT
WITH YOUR PERMISSION, SIR, I'D FEEL BETTER ON FOOT. I WANT TO CHECK ON THAT LIFE-FORM READING NEAR US FIRST


I FORGOT. THE IMPERIUM ALWAYS HAS A BETTER WAY OF DOING THINGS, HAS IT NOT? GENERALLY THE HARDEST WAY
WE TAKE WHATEVER ROUTE NECESSARY TO FULFILL OUR DUTY, SIR. WE NEVER SHIRK THE HARD WAY, IF IT IS NECESSARY.

ARAGONES AND GRELL TOGETHER.

#33

ON SALE IN OCTOBER

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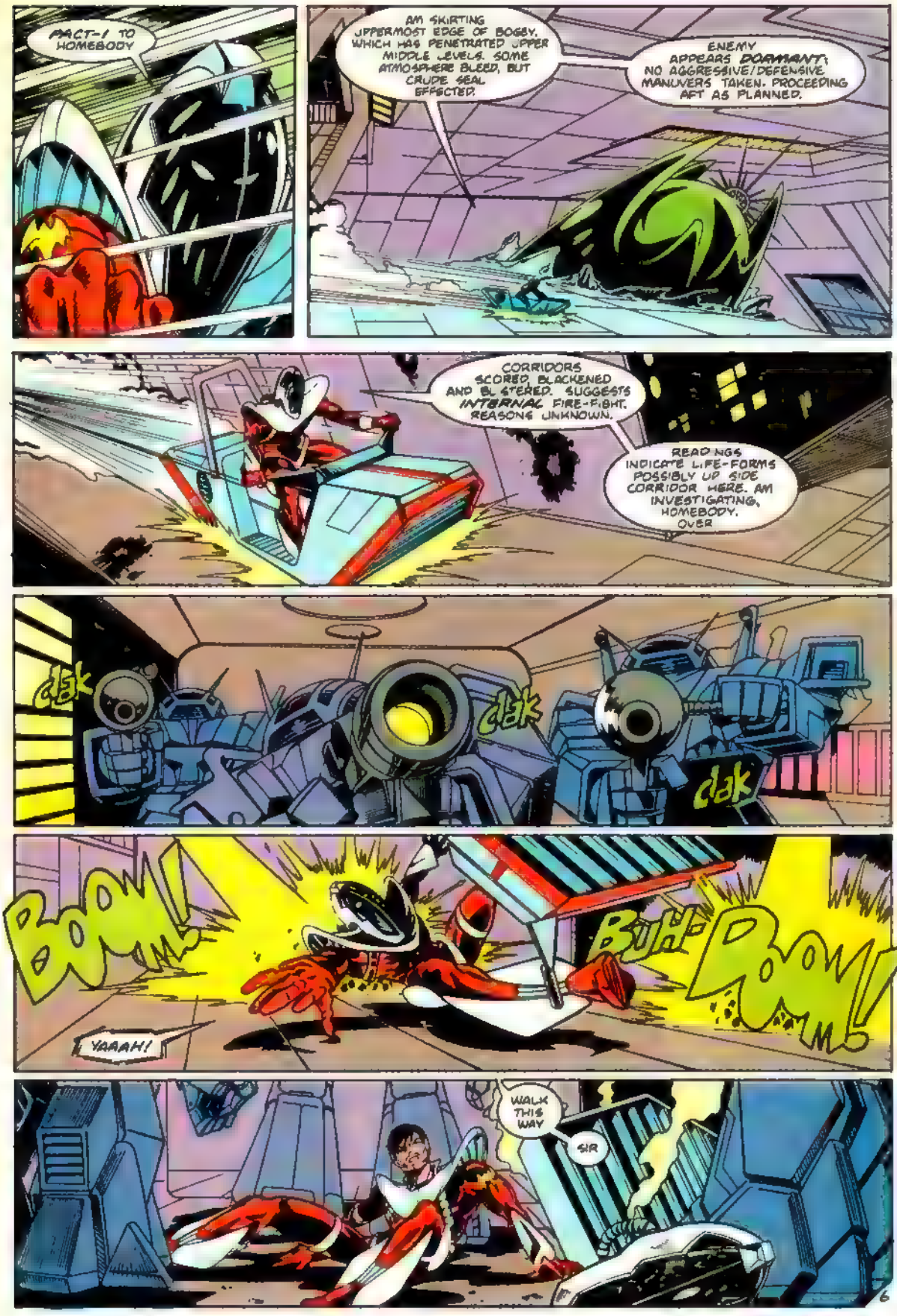
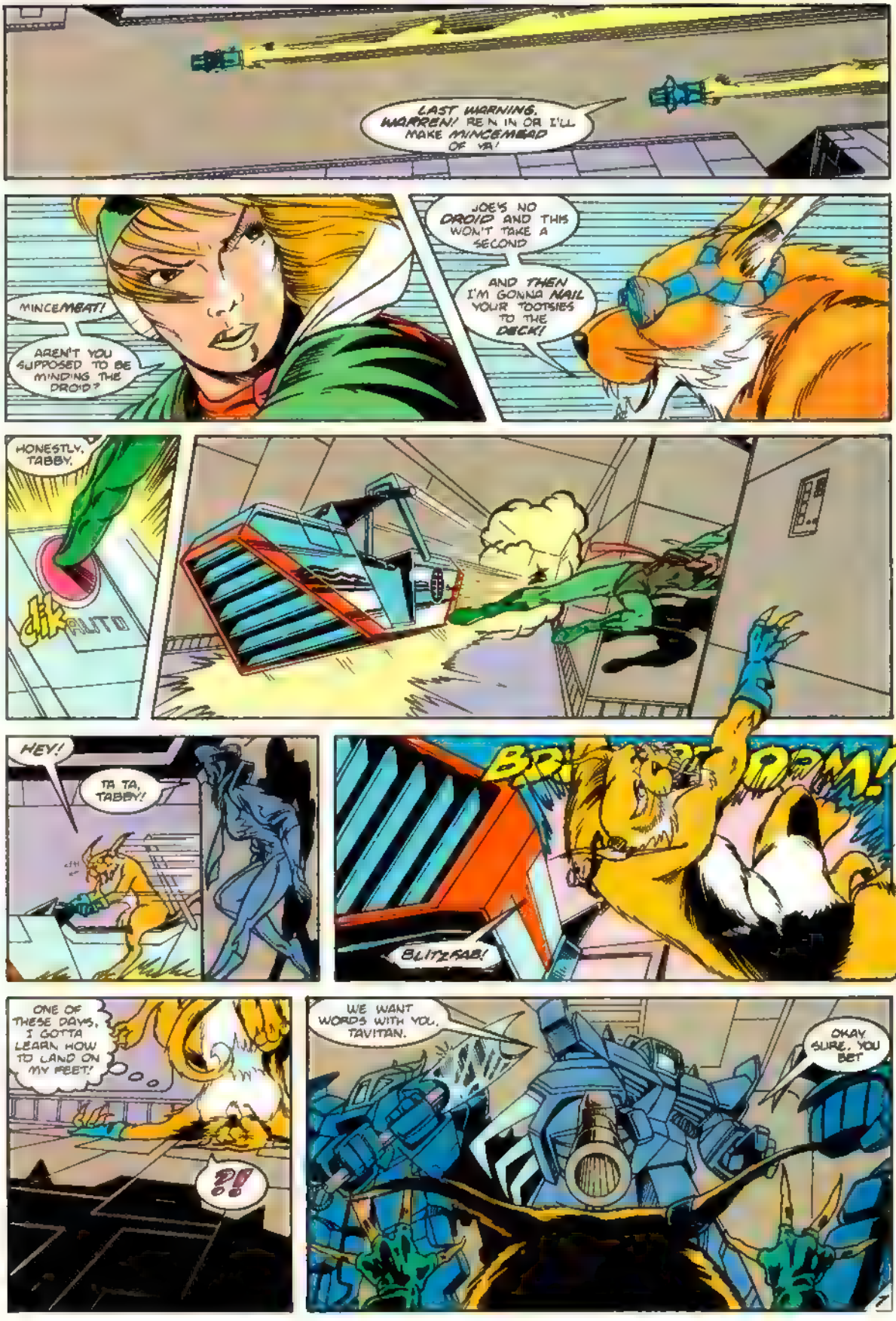
I HAVE A JOB TO DO, TABBY, AND IF YOU THINK YOU CAN STOP ME, YOU'D BETTER THINK AGAIN!
RRRRWWWR!
EECK!
TIME YOU AND ME GOT SOMETHING STRAIGHT, LADY.
I AIN'T NO TABBY!
BY GOD, I'M FED UP WITH YOU IMPIES AND YOUR ARROGANT WAYS! ALWAYS SO RESPECTFULLY CONDESCENDING! EVERYONE KNOWS YOUR KAHN HONORED HIS TREATY WITH US BY SENDING THE BARE MINIMUM, AND THOSE FAR FROM HIS BEST!
I DO NOT FEEL QUALIFIED TO EVALUATE MY OWN PERFORMANCE.
THAT I LEAVE TO MY 'SUPERIOR' OFFICERS, SIR.
DAMNIT, MAN I DIDN'T MEAN...!
GO WHATEVER WAY YOU WANT
SO LONG AS IT'S IN OUR DIRECTION, EH, SPIT?
PTTH
4

OKAY, WE GOT THE TURRET AND THE DYNAGASHED PACKED AWAY, R AND R LINES* IN PLACE.
NOW WE GO HAVE SOME REAL FUN—BANGING OUT THE DENTS!
STICK WITH ME, KID. WE'LL MAKE YA A TECHNO YET. MAYBE EVEN A PLUMBER'S HELPER.
THANKS GOBS
*R AND R LINES— REFUEL AND REFIT.
DON'T MENTION IT
OKAY, HANDLE ME THAT #5 DIGITAL SPANNER, OKAY?
ROWWWR! THUFFERIN' MCINTOSH! I THINK I BEEN PEARL ALAMOED!
AND I CAN GUESS BY WHO!
COME BACK HERE, WARREN!
I WANTA #HOW YA HOW WE STORE OUR TOOLS!
5


FACT-1 TO HOMEBODY
AM SKIRTING UPPERMOST EDGE OF BOGEY, WHICH HAS PENETRATED UPPER MIDDLE LEVELS. SOME ATMOSPHERE BLEED, BUT CRUDE SEAL EFFECTED.
ENEMY APPEARS DORMANT; NO AGGRESSIVE/DEFENSIVE MANUVERS TAKEN. PROCEEDING AFT AS PLANNED.
CORRIDORS SCORED, BLACKENED AND BLASTERED. SUGGESTS INTERNAL FIRE-FIGHT. REASONS UNKNOWN.
READINGS INDICATE LIFE-FORMS POSSIBLY UP SIDE CORRIDOR HERE. AM INVESTIGATING, HOMEBODY. OVER
dak
dak
dak
BOOM!
BUM-BOOM!
YAAAH!
WALK THIS WAY
SIR


LAST WARNING, WARREN! RE N IN OR I'LL MAKE MINCEMEAT OF YA!
MINCEMEAT!
AREN'T YOU SUPPOSED TO BE MINDING THE DROID?
JOE'S NO DROID AND THIS WON'T TAKE A SECOND
AND THEN I'M GONNA NAIL YOUR TOOTSIES TO THE DECK!
HONESTLY, TABBY.
dik AUTO
HEY!
TA TA, TABBY!
BRRR

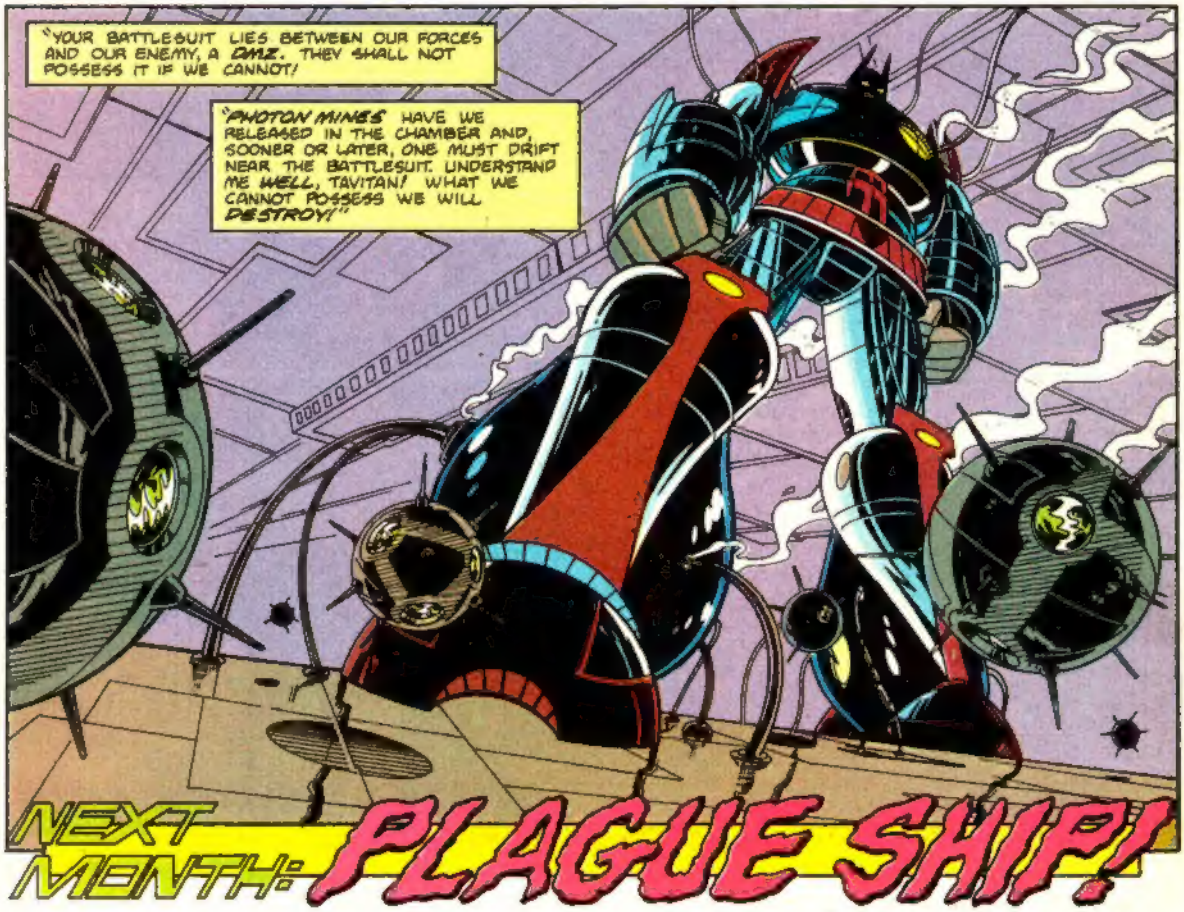
PRICE, eh? WELL, GLAD TO HAVE YOU WITH US, LIEUTENANT! DAMNED GLAD!
MATT ZELL, ENSIGN. TERRAN STELLAR NAVY. RANKING OFFICER SINCE THE REVOLT. SORRY ABOUT THE WELCOME--BOYS THOUGHT YOU WERE ONE OF THOSE MURDEROUS RAIDING OUTWORLDERS.
'REVOLT' ENSIGN?
MUTINY. FIVE YEARS AGO. HORRIBLE STUFF.
KILLED ALL RANKING OFFICERS. OUTWORLDERS OUTNUMBER US FIVE-TO-ONE. BUT-THANK GOD!- OUR FIREPOWER'S GREATER. WE HOLD THE MUNITION AND MACHINE SHOPS. YOU LANDED IN THE DMZ!
WHO MUTINIED, ENSIGN?
I TOLD YOU LIEUTENANT! THOSE MURDEROUS DOGS FROM THE OUTER PLANETS OF THE CONFEDERATION!
THEY REFUSE TO SHOULDER THEIR FAIR SHARE OF THIS TERRIBLE WAR. NOW THAT YOU'RE HERE, WE CAN QUASH THIS MUTINY ONCE AND FOR ALL!
HOW SO ENSIGN?
YOU'RE GOING TO LEAD US TO VICTORY IN THAT BATTLESUIT YOU CAME IN, LIEUTENANT.
OR YOU WILL SURELY DIE.
ROWWR! PUT ME DOWN! I THOUGHT WE WERE ALL ON THE SAME SIDE!
IT DEPENDS, TAVITAN, WHICH WAR YOU'RE FIGHTING.
THIS ORION WAR - EARTH AND THE SOLAR PLANETS, THE INNERWORLDS, THEY ALL FIGHT FOR THEIR SURVIVAL! FEUH! THE DANGER IS NOT TO OUR PLANETS!
YET THEY DRAIN OUR WORLDS OF THE YOUNG BLOOD, OUR WARRIORS, TO DIE FOR THEM WHEN THEY WOULD NOT DIE FOR US! NO MORE!
BRAVE TALK INSIDE A TIN CAN! FACE ME LIKE A MAN! ROWWR!

I WOULD NOT REDUCE MYSELF SO FAR.
OKAY, SPLIT HAIRENDS! FACE ME LIKE A FEMALE!
LIKE A MARINE, WHICH IS WHAT I WAS. MEUH! TANEMARA I AM NAMED, FROM THE CHEYENNE PLANETS, AS THEY ARE CALLED.
OUR GODDESS OF OLD-WHITE PAINTED WOMAN-VISITED ME IN MY DREAMS AND SPOKE OF YOUR COMING. SHE HAS GUIDED ME IN ALL OUR BATTLES.
ME?! HAIRBALLS! I'M JUST A TECHNO!

SHE SAYS YOU WILL LEAD US TO VICTORY IN YOUR BATTLESUIT, EH, SPIT?
Ptt

YOUR GODDESS'S BEEN IN THE CATNIP, TANEMARA!
NO WAY, SAN JOSE!

SHE ALSO SAYS THERE IS MORE THAN ONE, WAY TO SKIN A TAVITIAN!


"YOUR BATTLESUIT LIES BETWEEN OUR FORCES AND OUR ENEMY, A OME. THEY SHALL NOT POSSESS IT IF WE CANNOT!
"PHOTON MINES HAVE WE RELEASED IN THE CHAMBER AND, SOONER OR LATER, ONE MUST DRIFT NEAR THE BATTLESUIT. UNDERSTAND ME WELL, TAVITAN! WHAT WE CANNOT POSSESS WE WILL DESTROY!"
NEXT MONTH: PLAGUE SHIP!

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